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Document Number: 2003BOGOTA09054

UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 1

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PAGE 01  
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BOGOTA 09054 01 OF 02 292347Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9424  
INFO LABOR COLLECTIVE  
AMEMBASSY ABUJA  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
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AMEMBASSY QUITO  
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PAGE 02 BOGOTA 09054 01 OF 02 292347Z

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 009054

SENSITIVE

COMMERCE FOR 4332

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: EINV, EPET, PHUM, PREL, CO  
SUBJECT: VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES -- THE LAUNCH OF THE COLOMBIA  
PROCESS

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: POST HOSTED A MEETING ON THE VOLUNTARY  
PRINCIPLES ON SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS (VPS) WITH BRITISH

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 1

UNCLASSIFIED

AND U.S. EXTRACTIVE COMPANIES AND GOC OFFICIALS. COMPANIES DISCUSSED THE CHALLENGES OF LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION, AND EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR CONVENING AN IN-COUNTRY COMMITTEE TO IMPROVE IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS. GOC OFFICIALS WERE EQUALLY POSITIVE ABOUT SUCH A PROCESS. THE NEXT STEPS INVOLVE DEVELOPING A WORK PLAN THAT WILL EXPAND GOC PARTICIPATION IN THE VP PROCESS IN COLOMBIA, AND WILL EVENTUALLY INCORPORATE NGOS INTO THE PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

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BACKGROUND  
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2. (U) IN JUNE, DRL A/S LORNE CRANER, ACCOMPANIED BY OFFICIALS FROM NORWAY AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, MET WITH  
PAGE 03 BOGOTA 09054 01 OF 02 292347Z  
VARIOUS GOC ENTITIES AND MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN THE EXTRACTIVE SECTOR TO GAUGE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO PROMOTE THE VPS IN COLOMBIA. COMPANIES AND GOC OFFICIALS RESPONDED POSITIVELY.

3. (SBU) ON SEPTEMBER 22, POST HOSTED A HIGH-LEVEL MEETING BETWEEN EXISTING VP PARTICIPANTS (BRITISH PETROLEUM (BP), CHEVRONTExACO, OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM (OXY)), AND GOC OFFICIALS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, MINDEF, THE MFA, AND THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY, TO LAUNCH THE INITIATIVE IN COLOMBIA. ALSO PRESENT WERE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE COLOMBIAN PETROLEUM ENTERPRISE (ECOPETROL) AND THE COLOMBIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCERS (ACP). AMBASSADOR WOOD, AMBASSADOR TEUNIS KAMPER OF THE NETHERLANDS, CHARGE SUSAN LE JEUNE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND CHARGE TOM TYRIHJELL OF NORWAY EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE VPS IN COLOMBIA.

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GOC: THE PROCESS PROMOTES "DEMOCRATIC SECURITY"  
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4. (SBU) CARLOS FRANCO, ADVISOR TO VICE PRESIDENT SANTOS, VIEWS THE VPS AS AN IMPORTANT TRIPARTITE INITIATIVE, WHICH FITS INTO THE GOC'S HUMAN RIGHTS AND "DEMOCRATIC SECURITY" STRATEGIES. HE OUTLINED A VISION TO EXTEND THE MULTILATERAL EFFORT BEYOND COMPANIES IN THE EXTRACTIVE SECTOR, AND ALSO EXPRESSED THE SUPPORT OF THE GOC, IN PARTICULAR THE VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER CAMILO REYES ADDED THAT THE GOC NEEDS TO STRENGTHEN ITS ABILITY TO PROMOTE THE RULE OF LAW, NOTING THAT THE PRIVATIZATION OF SECURITY OFTEN BRINGS ITS OWN PROBLEMS.

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 09054 01 OF 02 292347Z

5. (SBU) MEETING PARTICIPANTS DISCUSSED THE ROLE OF THE GOC IN VPS DECISION-MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION. THERE WAS WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT ON THE NEED TO ENGAGE THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL (FISCALIA), OMBUDSMAN (DEFENSORIA), INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE (PROCURADURIA), MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, AND THE NEWLY CREATED NATIONAL HYDROCARBONS AGENCY (AGENCIA NACIONAL DE HIDROCARBUROS).

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MULTINATIONALS: THE TIME IS RIGHT TO PROCEED ...  
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6. (SBU) BRITISH PETROLEUM (BP), OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM (OXY), AND CHEVRONTXACO REAFFIRMED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE COLOMBIA VPS PROCESS. BOTH BP AND OXY HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN INTEGRATING THE VPS INTO THEIR OPERATIONS. EVEN THOUGH ONLY A RECENT ENTRANT INTO THE PROCESS, OXY HAS BEGUN REQUIRING THE INCLUSION OF THE VPS LANGUAGE INTO ITS AGREEMENTS WITH ECOPETROL AND THE MILITARY, AND HAS MONITORING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR ITS PRIVATE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS. FOR BP, A LONG-TIME SUPPORTER OF THE PROCESS, THE VPS HAVE BEEN FULLY INCORPORATED INTO ITS

BOGOTA 00009054 002 OF 002

ESS

COLOMBIA OPERATIONS. THE COMPANY HAS PERFORMED A LINE-BY-LINE AUDIT OF ITS SECURITY PROCEDURES TO EVALUATE COMPLIANCE WITH EACH OF THE VPS PROVISIONS.

7. (SBU) ECOPETROL, A NEW PARTICIPANT, OUTLINED ITS CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES, AND RECOGNIZED THE NEED TO PLAY A LEAD ROLE IN THIS AREA. THE COLOMBIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCERS (ACP) EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR FORMING A NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS THE VPS AND BROADER CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) ISSUES. ACP HAS ALREADY CONVENED A MEETING WITH COLOMBIAN EXTRACTIVE COMPANIES TO DISCUSS CSR ISSUES AND EXPRESSED ITS VIEW THAT THE VPS CAN BE AN IMPORTANT INSTRUMENT IN RAISING THE CSR BAR FOR ALL COMPANIES IN COLOMBIA. PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING ISSUES THIS COMMITTEE COULD ADDRESS:

-- PROMOTE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF "CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY;"

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 09054 02 OF 02 292348Z  
-- SHARE BEST PRACTICES AND SERVE AS AMBASSADORS FOR THE VPS;

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED  
Current Handling: n/a  
Document Number: 2003BOGOTA09054

Page: 4

Channel: n/a

- STUDY THE ROLE OF LABOR UNIONS AND ILO STANDARDS IN COLOMBIA;
- EXAMINE SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES: VETTING, FOLLOW-UP ON HUMAN RIGHTS INVESTIGATIONS AND PROSECUTIONS, AND MONITORING OF EQUIPMENT TRANSFERS;
- REFINE INTERACTION AMONG THE COMPANIES, GOC, AND NGOS;
- HOW TO FIGHT CORRUPTION AND PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT;
- SPELL OUT THE ROLE OF THE VPS IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH CONTRACTORS AND SUB-CONTRACTORS; AND
- HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF PARAMILITARIES.

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... AND NGOS WILL EVENTUALLY PARTICIPATE  
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8. (SBU) PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED THE DIFFICULTIES IN BRINGING LOCAL NGOS INTO THE PROCESS TOO SOON. IT WAS AGREED THAT INTERNATIONAL NGOS SUPPORTING THE VPS SHOULD BE CONSULTED FOR GUIDANCE REGARDING CREDIBLE LOCAL NGOS WHO COULD RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY.

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THE WAY FORWARD  
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PAGE 04                      BOGOTA 09054 02 OF 02 292348Z

9. (SBU) ACP AND BP WILL PREPARE A PROPOSED IN-COUNTRY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN FOR DISTRIBUTION TO ALL VPS PARTICIPANTS. ACP AND COMPANIES PROPOSE TO HOLD REGULAR MEETINGS THAT WILL ALSO INCLUDE LESS FREQUENTLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS WITH VPS PARTICIPANT EMBASSIES AND KEY GOC STAKEHOLDERS.

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Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 4

UNCLASSIFIED